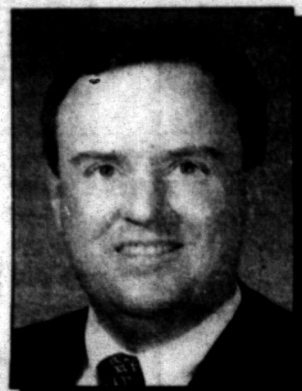


EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



**William H.
Perkins Jr.**
Editor

EDITOR
William H. Perkins Jr.
wperkins@mbcb.org

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Tony Martin
tmartin@mbcb.org

LAYOUT/DESIGN
Matt Broome
mbroome@mbcb.org

ADVERTISING
Dana Richardson
drichardson@mbcb.org

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Brenda Quattlebaum
bquattlebaum@mbcb.org

EDITOR EMERITUS
Don McGregor

Baptist Record Advisory Committee:
Mack Amis, McComb
James Beasley, Crystal Springs
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Beverly Pyron, Natchez
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Postmaster:
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Tel: (601) 968-3800
Fax: (601) 292-3330
E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

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'Back at the ATM'

Over time, Mississippians have become too cavalier about the impact of gambling on our state — and based on our behavior, that apparently includes many Mississippi Baptists. We just don't take it very seriously, similar to our attitude about alcohol even as the bodies continue to pile up.

Big Gambling has always been about the money, and the political and social power that comes along with that money.

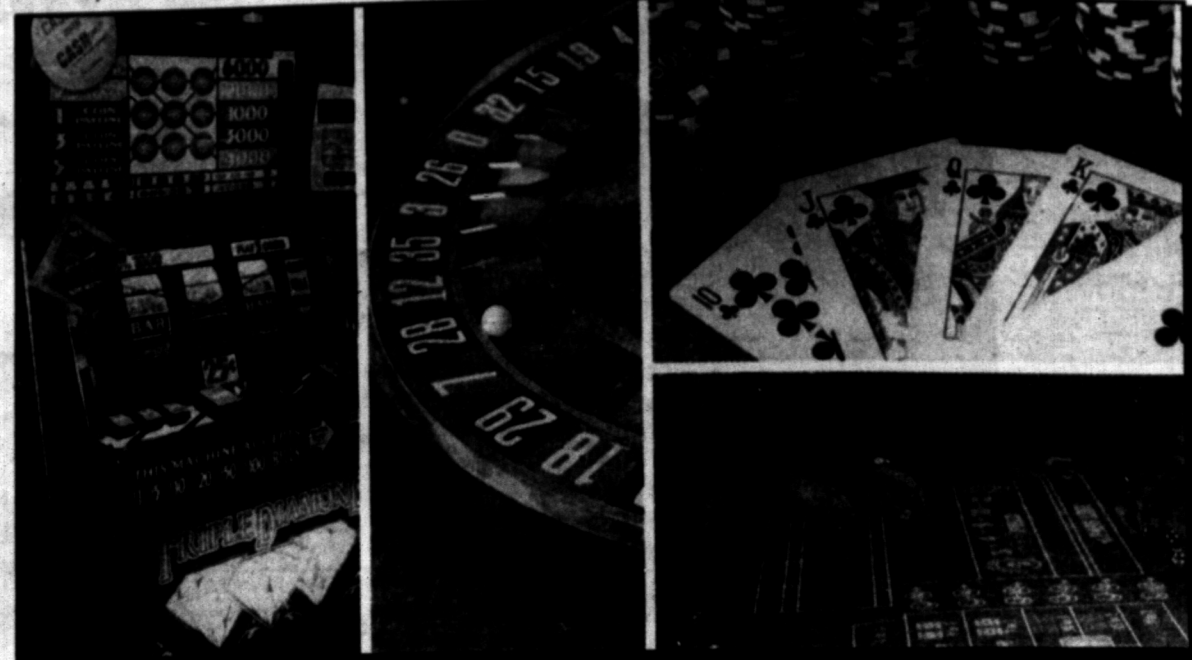
Now someone who claims to be a "pit boss," one of those sinister-looking fellows in expensive suits who walk the floor of the casino patrolling the gambling tables, has written a book titled, *Casino Confidential* (Quirk Books 2008). He does not reveal his identity but rather lists "Anonymous" as the author, thus the qualifier that he is someone who claims to be a pit boss.

Nonetheless, his observations ring true to anyone with a passing knowledge of how legalized gambling works and how the deck is always stacked against the individual gambler. Some intriguing tidbits from the book, excerpted recently by

Newsweek magazine and msnbc.com:

- No matter what game you're talking about — blackjack, craps, Elvis Presley slot machines — the odds are always in the casino's favor. This advantage is called the house edge and ensures that the casinos stay in business. They aren't cheating; they'll lose their license if they rip you off. But there are plenty of legal ways they can get you to stop paying attention to your bet.

- If you're serious about gambling, don't drink while you do it. Alcohol is a casino's best friend: It makes you do things no sane, rational person would ever think of doing, like betting your entire paycheck on red 22 — again! In gambling jargon,



a "fish" is an easy mark, and there's a reason casinos try to make you drink like one. Also, be wary if a casino starts offering you other freebies, especially after you've won a lot. The casino owners are going to do whatever they can to keep you there so they can win their money back. Want a complimentary dinner for two? A hotel room? Perhaps a free bottle of bubbly? No problem. They want you to think to yourself, "Wow, these guys are great! I don't want to leave just yet."

- Casinos spend millions studying psychology and what motivates us to take risks. That's why you see so much red, especially on slot machines — red supposedly attracts players and gets them to think of victory. Casinos have also experimented with different scents — a kind of gamblers' aroma-therapy. Should you forget to wear a watch, good luck finding out what time it is. The only clocks in casinos are on the employees' time cards. Casinos want you to lose track of time; that's why windows are so rare. It could be 5 in the morning or 5 in the afternoon, but inside a casino it's always forget-your-troubles time.

- The inventor of chips was a genius. Plopping down a stack of \$100 chips isn't nearly as painful as putting down a wad of \$100 bills. When you win a small jackpot at the tables, dealers automatically pay you in chips, hoping you'll burn right through them without a second thought. Have you ever noticed there are a dozen places in a casino to buy chips but only one place where you can cash them in? Cash goes straight into your pocket, and the casino owners know they might never see it again.

- [Y]ou shouldn't step inside the casino unless you have 100 times your smallest bet. If you only have \$100, you should play the \$1 tables. I see people sit down at a \$10 table and buy in for \$100 all the time. Twenty minutes later, they're all out of cash and back at the ATM.

Gambling is bad for Mississippi, and bad for Mississippians. It's bad for America. Always has been, always will be. Are we too far down the slippery slope to see that?

GUEST OPINION:



Pray for Kenya

By Erich Bridges
International Mission Board

lem that has plagued Africa for a very long time. It's time to confront it, according to some of Kenya's Christian leaders.

"A demon has been set loose," warned Ngari Kariithi, senior pastor at Karura Community Church in Nairobi, Kenya's capital. "The depth of hatred was a shock to many of us. The church needs to face up to what is happening and get involved. Pray God will help us with tribalism. Pray the church can rise above this. We are the hope for Kenya."

First, he and other leaders stress, Christians must repent of their own continuing hatreds.

"The elections did not cause this violence," said Simon Mwangi, pastor of Parklands Baptist Church in Nairobi. "The election results triggered something that was already here, a rift between our ethnic groups. Kenya, as a nation, has sinned

against God. Kenyans are killing Kenyans. Christians are killing Christians. We must put an end to this. Kenya is a Christian nation, and we need to start showing God's love."

During a national day of prayer and repentance observed in churches around the nation in January, Mwangi said Kenyans "have seen a dormant volcano explode into life.... We have seen the fruit of hatred and anger. Now let's pray for an explosion of love!"

Arthur Kinyanjui, pastor of Nakuru Baptist Church, delivered a passionate reminder of the Christian roots of modern Kenya.

"Our churches are mixed; we have every tribe represented in our churches," he said. "This (violence) should not be happening, because we are all brothers. When Jesus came to East Africa in 1936 with the great East African Revival,

we all broke away from those thoughts and became one in Christ. The revival changed the entire nation and its way of thinking. We became brothers in Christ! Now what is happening to us? Are we going back and repeating history?"

Many Kenyan Christians are taking a stand against violence and hatred. Join them in this prayer of Kenyan Baptist leader Samuel Mbiti:

"Lord, help us restore peace in this country. We pray for those who have been displaced. We pray for those who have lost their property, their loved ones and even all their hopes that have been shattered. Father, we pray that You will restore hope to these people, that You will restore hope to our nation. We pray, O Father, that the enemy will be ashamed, because we know that more than 2,000 years ago You defeated him on the cross. Today we are sure, God, that his works have been defeated. Thank you, Lord. Help us as we go through this that Your church shall stand firm. As You said, the gates of hell shall not prevail."

Amen.

Erich Bridges is senior writer with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

Candidates stake their abortion positions

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The 35th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* on Jan. 22 didn't pass without nearly every U.S. presidential candidate stating either their opposition to or support of the controversial ruling and, by extension, underscoring the significance of this year's race.

Every major candidate with the exception of Republican Rudy Giuliani — whose pro-choice position is unpopular within his party — released statements Jan. 22 that broke along party lines. The two leading Democrats, in fact, seemed to be battling to see who could be more pro-choice.

In her statement, Democrat U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton said she was "reaffirming" her commitment to legal abortion.

"When I'm President," she said, "I will appoint judges to our courts who understand that *Roe v. Wade* isn't just binding legal precedent, it is the touchstone of our reproductive freedom, the embodiment of our most fundamental rights, and no one — no judge, no governor, no Senator, no President — has the right to take it away."

Democrat U.S. Senator Barack Obama has made unity a major theme of his campaign, although his statement on *Roe* left little room for pro-lifers. His statement referred to the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act that was upheld by the Supreme Court, although he avoided

using the term "partial-birth" and instead called the law the "Federal Abortion Ban."

"Thirty-five years after the Supreme Court decided *Roe v. Wade*, it's never been more important to protect a woman's right to choose," Obama said. "Last year, the Supreme Court decided by a vote of 5-4 to uphold the Federal Abortion Ban, and in doing so undermined an important principle of *Roe v. Wade*: that we must always protect women's health. With one more vacancy on the Supreme Court, we could be looking at a majority hostile to a woman's fundamental right to choose for the first time since *Roe v. Wade*. The next president may be asked to nominate that Supreme Court justice. That is what is at stake in this election."

"Throughout my career, I've been a consistent and strong supporter of reproductive justice, and have consistently had a 100% pro-choice rating with Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America."

John Edwards, running third in polls among Democrats, said the "hard right turn of the Supreme Court is a stark reminder of why Democrats cannot afford to lose the 2008 election. Too much is at stake — starting with a woman's right to choose."

This is the first presidential campaign since the court upheld a law that bars a specific late-term abortion procedure that involves

aborting the baby while part of it is outside the birth canal.

With partial-birth abortion, a baby is delivered feet first until only the head is left in the birth canal. The doctor then pierces the base of the infant's skull with surgical scissors, inserts a catheter into the opening and suctions out the brain, allowing a dead delivery. One nurse who witnessed such a procedure said she saw the baby's fingers "clasp and unclasp" and feet "kick" prior to the procedure being completed.

All total, between 45-50 million unborn babies have been killed since *Roe* was issued.

On the Republican side, U.S. Senator John McCain, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney all released statements saying they hope to see *Roe v. Wade* overturned.

McCain's statement said he has been a "strong supporter of the right to life movement" since being elected to Congress in 1982. He noted he has adopted two children and said he believes *Roe* was a "tragic" decision and wrongly decided.

U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, who has endorsed McCain, read the statement on behalf of McCain at the March for Life rally in Washington D.C.

"If I am fortunate enough to be elected as the next President of the United States, I pledge to you to be a loyal and unswerving friend of the right to life movement," McCain's statement read. "The pro-life movement appeals to the best instincts within each and every one of us. In that regard, our pro-life cause will ultimately be successful."

Huckabee called *Roe* a "great American tragedy" that has led to the "loss of millions of innocent lives." He also pledged to work for passage of a human life amendment to the Constitution if elected.

"My convictions regarding the sanctity of life have always been clear and consistent, without equivocation or

wavering," Huckabee said. "I believe that *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned. I applaud those who are marching in Washington and elsewhere to call attention yet again to this terrible injustice ... I will march with them next year if I am elected president. As president, I pledge that I will continue the fight so that every child can have his or her God-given right to life."

Romney said he supports the work of those who are "creating a genuine culture of life."

"After 35 years of *Roe v. Wade*, we are again reminded why this decision should be overturned," Romney said. "We recognize the worth and dignity of every person, a fact that is ingrained in our hearts and etched in our national purpose. Unelected judges should not be the final arbiters on these important decisions which define who we are as a people."

U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who is not running for president but whose seat is on the line with all 435 representatives up for election, also released a statement supporting *Roe*.

"On this day in 1973, the Supreme Court recognized that a woman has the power and fundamental right to choose what happens to her body and, by extension, her future," Pelosi said. "I will continue to fight for the right to choose, for safe and quality reproductive health care, comprehensive and medically sound reproductive education, and access to contraception in the United States and abroad."

Of the nine Supreme Court justices, only two (Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia) are on record as opposing *Roe*. However, pro-lifers hope President Bush's two appointees (Samuel Alito and John Roberts) would vote against *Roe* if given such a chance. The court's two oldest justices (John Paul Stevens and Ruth Bader Ginsburg) support *Roe*.



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND
FRONT PAGE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

JANUARY 31, 2008

VOL. 132

No. 5

Help for pastors

DALLAS (BP) — How do you counsel an abusive husband? Why should you re-evaluate a ministry every 18 months? Why do 60-year-old pastors tend to stop leading and start following? Should a pastor lead a split from a church? How do you find and attract good staff members? What is the most important responsibility of a pastor? Two veteran ministers answer these and a host of other questions in a new book aimed at helping pastors at any stage of ministry, no matter the size of the church. Mac Brunson, pastor of First Church in Jacksonville, Fla., and James W. Bryant, professor of pastoral theology at Criswell College in Dallas, are co-authors of *The New Guidebook for Pastors*, released by B&H Publishers of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention. The authors revisited the original *Guidebook for Pastors* written more than 25 years ago by W.A. Criswell, the long-tenured pastor of First Church in Dallas. Brunson is a former pastor at the flagship Texas church. The *New Guidebook for Pastors* frequently refers to the life messages, examples and writings of two former pastors of First Church, Dallas: Criswell and George W. Truett, who "still encourage pastors today," the authors acknowledge. Brunson and Bryant also tap 21 notable Southern Baptist pastors, seminary faculty, and other contemporary leaders who offer pertinent testimonies and insight based on years of experience in ministry. The call to preach, the authors note, is a call to prepare, which is the focus of the first two chapters of *The New Guidebook for Pastors*. Bryant and Brunson also warn: "If you are in the ministry and do not have a clear, unquestionable sense of God's call, even though you may not be able to explain it, then you should leave the ministry immediately. The harm you can do to people, a congregation, your family, yourself, and the kingdom is beyond description." For pastors confident in their call, however, the authors concede, "There will be many times when the only thing that holds your hand to the plow is your call."

Looking back

10 years ago

Combined student enrollment for the 1997 fall semester at Southern Baptists' six seminaries surpasses the 10,000 mark, with only one of the schools reporting a decline in enrollment.

20 years ago

Joe Cobb is honored for 20 years of service at the BSU of Northeast Community College in Booneville. Known affectionately around the BSU as "B.J." for "Bro. Joe," Cobb has served as director of the Northeast Community College BSU since 1967.

50 years ago

Hollywood producers of a motion picture on a handsome young evangelist with two working titles, *The Spellbinder* and *The Moneychanger*, state that "there is absolutely no connection with our movie and the life of Billy Graham."



YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my
sins and freedom from eternal
death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my
sins and to restore my rela-
tionship with you.
(I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus
Christ into my life. From this
time on, I want to live in a lov-
ing relationship with Him. (I
receive Christ as my Savior
and Lord.)

"But as many as received him,
to them he gave the right to become
children of God, even to those who
believe in his name." (John 1:12)

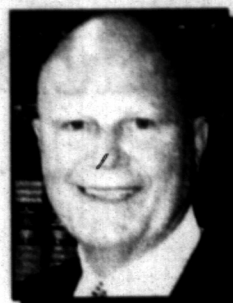
If you make a decision for
Jesus Christ today, contact a
local Baptist church for spiritual
guidance.

A CLOGGED WATER LINE

Years ago, I was called to a church that provided a home for their pastor. My family and I moved in and in the process discovered that we had little or no water. Regardless of whether you turned the water on in the kitchen, the bathroom, or a faucet outside it would always begin with a pretty good stream that would soon become a dribble that would finally just be a drip. It did not take long to discover there was a problem, but the solution was slow in arriving. When I mentioned the trouble to a couple of men in the church, their response was, "Well, the last pastor had it that way, and he seem to cope with it okay." That was enough encouragement for me to say, "Well, if he could do it, I can too!" and so we learned to live with just a little water dripping in our house.

It was certainly different from other places we had lived because we had gotten accustomed to having running water, but we learned to adapt to the problem. Most of the time it worked out okay. Actually, it was not all that inconvenient. If you wanted to have a bath in the evening, just turn the water on as you left for work in the morning, and by the time you got in it would be just about ready. If you wanted to wash a load of clothes, the same process was needed. Turn it on when you got up in the morning, and that afternoon they would be ready to dry.

Now the problem came when you needed to do several things the same day. Then you had a dilemma on your hands. The same problem arose if you wanted to do anything else with the water while you were taking care of washing dishes, clothes, or other water-related needs around the house.



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

I feel sure that some of you who are reading this think I'm just making that up. Wrong! It was actually a situation that created some dilemmas like that, but no one seemed to be too concerned about it. After we had lived there for over a year, some of the men in the church began to talk about it and ask if it was still a problem. They said, "There has got to be a reason for that." I agreed with this brilliant surge of reasoning that seemed to pervade the discussion and wondered what we could do in order to find what was creating the water shortage.

The well was not far from the house, and the men began to discuss whether there might be some blockage, some way that the line had been clogged from the well to the house. It began to make sense to me. They decided that one day they would just meet out there, put their collective thinking together, and try to find where the line might be clogged. The day was set, some other men were recruited, and one Saturday morning they all showed up ready to work. After a brief discussion about how we would go about the process of finding if there was a place in the line that might be clogged, they went to work digging out the waterline. In short order they came to a coupling that attached one piece of pipe to another, and they loosened it only to find at that coupling whoever had put it together had gotten some large rocks

lodged in the pipe. That was the reason the water could not flow. The line was clogged at that one spot. The guys took the rocks out, gave them to me, hooked it back together, and turned the water on, and lo and behold, would you believe the water flowed into our house?

For years, it had been stopped up. For months, we had lived with a shortage of water, and now we had water, water flowing everywhere. It was a fantastic and euphoric moment in the Futral household. Old folks used to say that you never miss the water until the well runs dry. Of course, that has scores of applications throughout life's experiences, but for all of us when you do not have water and cannot get water life gets serious in a hurry. Water is a fantastic thing. It is no wonder that the Scripture portrays our salvation as receiving the water of life. In the Old and New Testaments, the Scriptures resound with words of refreshing water. Isaiah would say, "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters and drink" (Isa. 55:1a). John chose to close out his unveiling of Christ in the Revelation by saying, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life" (Rev. 22:17).

Anyone who has been truly thirsty in a parched land, spiritually as well as physically, knows that water can be so, so good. When you take of the water of life, it is a glorious and incredible moment as the water flows through your parched heart, but what happens when you get filled with the water of life? Does it flow through you and does it flow to anyone else? By chance, do you become a clogged waterline? Sometimes it seems as though our churches are filled

with abundant water and the good things of God but they do not flow out to a world that desperately needs water, God's water, life-giving water in Christ.

Recently, some amazing statistics were released that showed maybe where the waterline gets clogged. Here is what a study showed. First of all, it said that here in America, of the people surveyed, about nine out of ten said that they personally knew somebody who was a Christian. Now think about that and let it soak in for a moment. All across our land, nine out of ten people have a good friend who is a Christian. They may work with them, live near them, and socialize with them, but most folks know somebody who is a Christian. That is a good thing!

The second part of the study is even more interesting. About eight out of ten of the people who are not Christians but knew Christians responded by saying that they would be willing to listen to a friend share their faith with them. Eight out of ten of the non-Christian, unbelievers were more than open to hear about Jesus. They are receptive to the water of life. An incredible thing about that is the study seemed to point out that the unbelieving world is more willing to listen to us share our faith with them than we are to do it. Maybe the breakdown is not just in this lost, ungodly, God-rejecting world, but somehow rocks have gotten stuck in the water line and become barriers to sharing our faith with others. The waterline of hope, blessing, and life everlasting has clogged up at the intersection of our own hearts.

I would encourage you today to think about those folks who you know who know that you are a Christian. Think about how many of them, eight out of ten possibly, who would be willing to listen if you were willing to share. Will you allow the Lord to come and open up your heart and open up the flow of your faith and testimony so that the blessings of the water of life can flow freely to a parched and waiting world?

The author may be contacted at
P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-
0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.

January is "Make Your Will" Month.

Are your ducks in a row regarding your last will and testament?



Photo courtesy of The Virginia Department Game & Inland Fisheries

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Simmons closing book on 30 years of Gulfshore ministry

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Frank Simmons has been through enough major storms along the Gulf Coast to be an honorary member of the storied Hurricane Chasers organization.

Simmons, for 30 years the manager of Mississippi Baptists' former Gulfshore Assembly near Pass Christian, can tick off the names of all the hurricanes and tropical storms that battered Gulfshore before Katrina finally destroyed it in 2005.

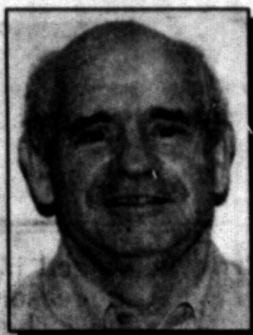
"There was Hurricane Frederic in 1979. Hurricane Bob also hit in 1979 during registration for one of the events at Gulfshore. There was so much water standing between the gate and the main building, we had to meet the guests at the gate, put them in a boat, and bring them in. We were registering people by boat," Simmons recalled.

"Hurricane Elena in 1985 caused significant damage, probably from a spinoff tornado. There was 18 inches of water on the first floor during Tropical Storm Isidore in 2002," he said.

Simmons, a native of Kosciusko, will retire effective Jan. 31, almost two-and-a-half years after Hurricane Katrina brought an end to Gulfshore's ministry after more than 50 years in Mississippi Baptists' hands. Messengers to the 2006 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention voted to sell the ruined property, and an \$18 million contract is pending with real estate development company NewTrac East LLC of Mandeville, La.

The 60-year-old Simmons doesn't plan to withdraw to the comfortable Gulf Coast home he shares with his wife Karen, however. He has signed on as church administrator for First Church, Gulfport, where he is a longtime member and where he met Karen, a church staffer, many years ago.

After three decades of dealing with air conditioner problems, plumbing crises, and kitchen equipment disasters, Simmons said his new job "feels like a natural fit."



Simmons

Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth. In the early 1970s, he served as minister for recreation and youth at Harrisburg Church in Tupelo, where the first Family Life Center in Mississippi outside the Jackson area was built.

He hired on full-time with Gulfshore in February 1978. "I was on the Gulfshore summer staff in 1967, when I was a sophomore in college. It didn't occur to me at that time that I would be back one day as the assembly director," he said.

Simmons, who recently wrapped up a second term as chairman of the board of the Southern Baptist Camping Association and has spent the two-and-a-half years since Katrina shuttling between his Gulfport home and the Baptist Building in Jackson to oversee the convention board's conference ministries program, said he is looking forward to spending more time with Karen — a 27-year staffer at First Church, Gulfport — their children, and their children's families.

Eldest son Jeff, who served on the Gulfshore summer staff in 1993, 1994, and 1995, lives in Pass Christian with wife Nancy — another former Gulfshore summer staffer — and their three-year-old daughter Hope. Jeff is a chemical engineer

The beachfront facilities of First Church, Gulfport, were also destroyed by Katrina. Simmons has served as a member of the master design team for the church's new facility currently under construction farther inland.

"I've had the privilege of being involved in 'dreaming the dream' for the new church facility," he said.

Simmons majored in recreation at Mississippi College in Clinton, then earned a master of religious education degree from

and bivocational pastor of Crosspoint Church in Gulfport, a church plant of First Church, Gulfport.

Daughter Julie Dunn, an accountant, lives in Long Beach with husband Kendall and two-year-old son Kendall Jr. They attend Crosspoint Church.

Youngest child Michael, who worked at Gulfshore in 2004 and 2005, is a student at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

According to figures compiled by Simmons, more than 425,000 people attended events at Gulfshore during his time there, and almost 10,000 decisions for Christ were recorded.

Simmons said he often muses about the impact of Gulfshore on the lives of Mississippi Baptists and others who attended events at the assembly. "We had professions of faith and baptisms and weddings at Gulfshore — even deaths. It was where life happened," he said.

A child of one of those marriages later came to work at Gulfshore, Simmons added with a smile.

He said he also thinks a great deal about "our Baptist forefathers who had the vision of what Gulfshore could be," and the permanent staffers and summer staffers who were the heart of the assembly's ministry. Remembering those people lifts his spirits, he said, and brings him to one clear conclusion.

"Gulfshore has not gone away. Gulfshore is still there. Gulfshore will always be there," he said.

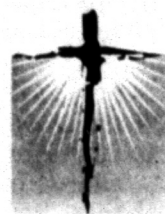
JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Deacon ordination, First Church, Ripley



2. Children and youth, Sulphur Springs Church, Conehatta



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

1. Brad Hill, a newly ordained deacon at First Church, Ripley, surrendered to the ministry recently. Shown are pastor Rex Yancey, Zak Hill, Jamie Hill, Sarah Hill, and Hill.
2. The children and youth of Sulphur Springs Church, Conehatta, visited a Christmas in Canton in December. The group also entered a float in Sebastopol's annual Christmas parade, the Christmas pageant, and held a "breakfast with Santa." Shown are the participants.
3. Iglesia Bautista Vita Adudante Church will host a Concert of Prayer 2008 on February 2 from 3-5 p.m. at Briarwood Church, Jackson. Special activities led by bilingual teachers are planned. For more information, call (601) 260-5177 or e-mail vidajackson@gmail.com.

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JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Herrington ordained, Hope Church, Neshoba County



2. Ordination, Pleasant Hill Church, Lincoln Assoc.



3. Deacon ordination, Tylertown, Tylertown



4. Deacon ordination, Indian Springs Church, Laurel

1. Allen Herrington was ordained to the gospel ministry Jan. 13 by Hope Church, Neshoba County, at the request of Liberty Church, Kemper County. He is shown receiving his certificate from Dennis Duvall, pastor of Hope.

2. Pleasant Hill Church, Lincoln Association, recently ordained David Champagne to the gospel ministry. He has served as pastor of Jayess Church, Jayess for one year. He and his family have returned to New Orleans Seminary where he will continue his studies toward a PhD in biblical languages. Champagne is shown receiving his ordination certificate from pastor Floyd Higginbotham.

3. Tylertown Church, Tylertown, recently ordained Shan Smith as deacon. Shown is pastor Buddy Day presenting the ordination certificate to Smith.

4. Indian Springs Church, Laurel, recently ordained Mark Boyd, Bob Hawkins, and Kimble Holifield as deacons. Shown are Boyd, Hawkins, and Holifield.

5. The children and youth committee of Mt. Zion Church, Eupora, recently participated in the local angel tree. Shown are the children with the toys they collected.

6. Several senior adults from First Church, Raymond, aged 64 to 86, have formed a comedy washtub band. The group shares with other senior groups, and does not charge but does accept love offerings for gas, etc. Shown is the group.

7. Bethany Church, Marshall County, recently ordained Derrick Sharp as deacon. Shown are Sharp and pastor Donald Worsham.

8. The shoebox mission team of Parkway Church, Morton, traveled to Duluth, Ga., in November to volunteer in the Atlanta processing center for Operation Christmas Child. The church collected 200 boxes for the project. Shown are the members of the team.

9. Bunker Hill Church, Columbia, will have their Winter Bible Study Feb. 3-6; Sun., 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 6:30 p.m. It will be led by Bill Miller, Tri-County Associate Director of Missions.

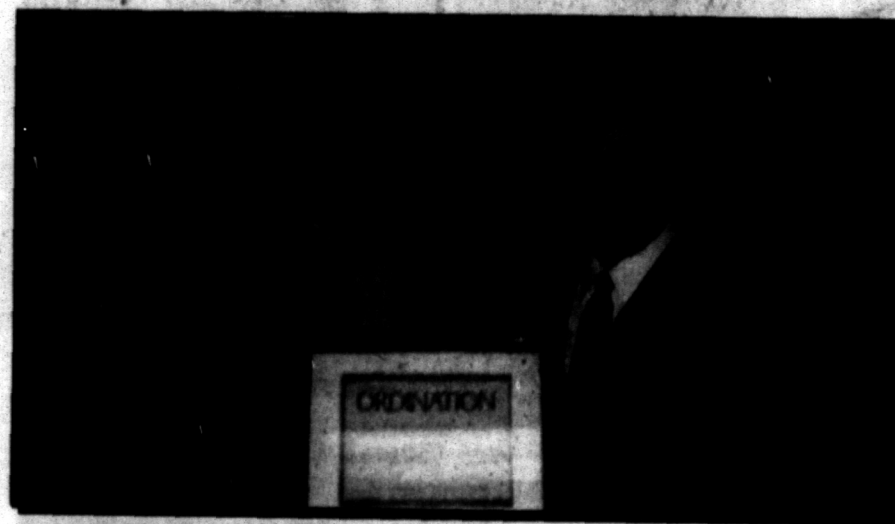
10. First Church, Summit, is hosting 33 Miles in concert Feb. 22. Doors open at 6 p.m.; concert at 7 p.m.



5. Angel tree project, Mt. Zion Church, Eupora



6. Senior adults, First Church, Raymond



7. Deacon ordination, Bethany Church, Marshall County



8. Shoebox mission team, Parkway Church, Morton

JUST FOR THE RECORD



11. Christmas baskets, Jerusalem Church, Attala Association

11. Jerusalem Church, Attala Association, exceeded their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal of \$1800 by collecting \$1948. The church also contributed 32 boxes to Operation Christmas Child, and members of the church prepared Christmas baskets for the sick and shut-ins. Shown are the participants.

12. Franklin Association's fall meeting was held at Concord Church, McCall Creek, in October. The Concord Church's puppet team supplied the entertainment which included area pastors performing during the event. Associational Missions Director Joe Hill is second from left.



12. Fall meeting, Concord Church, McCall Creek

COLLEGE & SEMINARY NEWS

1. Thirteen William Carey University New Orleans students will receive degrees in the first graduation ceremonies held since Hurricane Katrina on Feb. 15 at 6 p.m. in the Leavell Chapel located on the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary campus. Five students will receive bachelor of science in nursing degrees and eight students will receive bachelor of general studies degrees.

2. William Paul Chidester, Beaumont, received the Master of Divinity degree Dec. 15 from New Orleans Seminary. He served as pastor of Thompson Hill Church, Beaumont, and will soon be serving as associate pastor of First Church, Hobbs, N. Mex.

3. Mississippi College's School of Business next fall will award its first Crenshaw Family Scholarship named in honor of Wayne and Betty Crenshaw of Flowood. The MC scholarships are the result of an anonymous gift of \$100,000.



Crenshaws

13. The youth and children's missions organizations of Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association, participated in the hanging of the green and passed out fruit bags during the Christmas season. Shown are the participants.

14. The Glenda White Baptist Women's group from Bay Springs Church, Bay Springs, is sponsoring a Pure Water, Pure Love project to aid missionaries in providing fresh water in their areas of service. The group collected \$1184 for the project. The group also shared care boxes with inmates at the Jasper County jail as a Christmas project. Shown are the participants.

15. The children's praise choir of Trinity First Church, Waynesboro, presented Singing with the Angels Dec. 9. Shown are the participants.

16. Linwood Church, Union, will host a building dedication and reception Feb. 3, 10:30 a.m.

17. Temple Church East, Hattiesburg, will be hosting Family Force Five, Falling Up, Spoken, and This Beautiful Republic in concert Feb. 7, 7 p.m. Tickets are available at Temple East and West, Bob's Books, or online at www.outerlightconcerts.com.

18. Belzoni native and Southern Baptist Chaplain, Captain Scott Savell, was recently recognized as the Scott Air Force Base 375th Airlift Wing Director of Staff Company Grade Officer of the Year. The achievement recognizes his outstanding ministry to Airmen and their families, and specifically the Singles' Ministry Program he directs in Airmen Dorms.



18. Savell



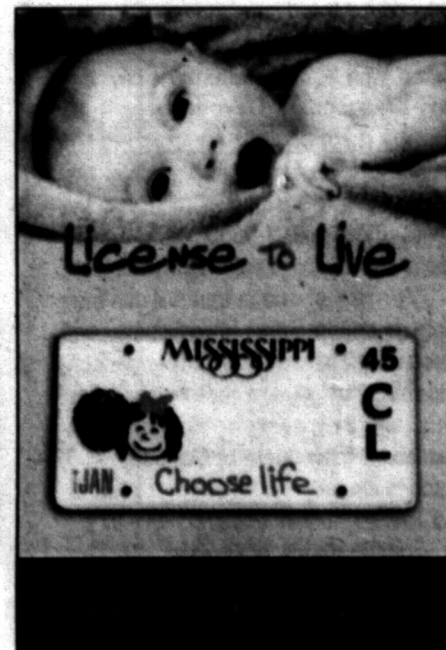
13. Hanging of the Green, Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Assoc.



14. Women's group, Bay Springs Church, Bay Springs



15. Children's praise choir, Trinity First Church, Waynesboro



Many women feel overwhelmed when facing an unplanned pregnancy. But there are safe places in Mississippi for these women to consider their options. Mississippi's pregnancy resource centers.

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Bibliocipher

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VFK AUR HNMK OVCK
LFAN TVCF BUP VMA
AUNL BMNAU? VFK BUP
CO AUP TNLFARFVTR
SVHHRF?

ERFROCO SNLM: OCZ

Clue: F = N

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Isaiah Five: Sixteen.

JUST FOR THE RECORD



19. Dedication of Sanctuary expansion, Mt. Olive Church, Ripley

19. Mt. Olive Church, Ripley, recently held a dedication service for the expansion of their sanctuary, including new pews, fellowship hall and educational space. Shown are Harold and Freida Morgan, pastor Terry Vuncannon, and Betty and Lynwood Shackelford.

20. Calvary Church, Golden Triangle Association,

recently ordained Marc Rushing as deacon.

21. The senior adult Sunday School class of Midway Church, Calhoun Association, has raised over \$1500 for the Memorial to the Missing at the Baptist Building, Jackson. Class members were asked to give \$1 each Sunday. Shown are the participants.



20. Rushing ordained, Calvary Church, Golden Triangle Association



21. Penny Project, Midway Church, Calhoun Association

REVIVAL

Oak Hill Church, Meridian: Revival, Feb. 17-20; Don Boone, speaker; Gary Dover, music; for information, call (601) 482-5583.

STATE NEWS

Join other Baptists and Pastor Roy Myers on this

Northeast Cruise & Tour

Enjoy Spring-time in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island!
Sail the Scenic St. Lawrence River to Quebec & Montreal!
Tour Montreal, Philadelphia, New York City & Boston!

On June 6, 2008 join other Baptists and your Spiritual Director and Baptist Chaplain Pastor Roy Myers, on this 15-day vacation including a seven-day deluxe Northeast Cruise with Holland America Line and a seven-day Northeast vacation. This will be Pastor Myers' fourth Your Man Tours trip as a Baptist Chaplain, and second time on this same Northeast cruise and tour. Your Baptist group will spend one night in Boston with a comprehensive city tour before boarding your 5-star ship the ms Maasdam. Devotions will be available daily while on board ship and some days on tour for those in the group who wish to participate. Ports include Bar Harbor, Maine; Halifax and Sydney, Nova Scotia; and Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Cruise into the mouth of the St. Lawrence River to Saguenay Fjord with 1,500 foot-high cliffs. Your final ports include Quebec City and Montreal. In Montreal meet "your man" for a city tour of the "Paris of the Americas." Your motor-coach tour will continue through the Adirondack and Catskill Mountains, Hyde Park, Philadelphia, and New York City, with included city tours. Prices start at only \$2033 (per person, double occupancy) including taxes, ship fuel surcharge, the motor-coach tour with daily sightseeing, seven nights in hotels, and the seven-day deluxe cruise. Add \$500 for airfare from Memphis, TN; Jackson, Birmingham or Gulfport/Biloxi, MS. Family and friends are welcome. Space is limited.

For brochure, information and letter from Pastor Myers with his phone number, call 7 days a week:

'YOUR MAN' TOURS 1-800-736-7300



1. Townsend and family

1. Bay Springs Church, Bay Springs, welcomed their new minister of music and activities, Dale Townsend and his family with an old-fashioned pounding. He is a Pelahatchie native and a graduate of William Carey University. He and his wife Amy have three children: Elizabeth, Jonathon, and Rebecca.

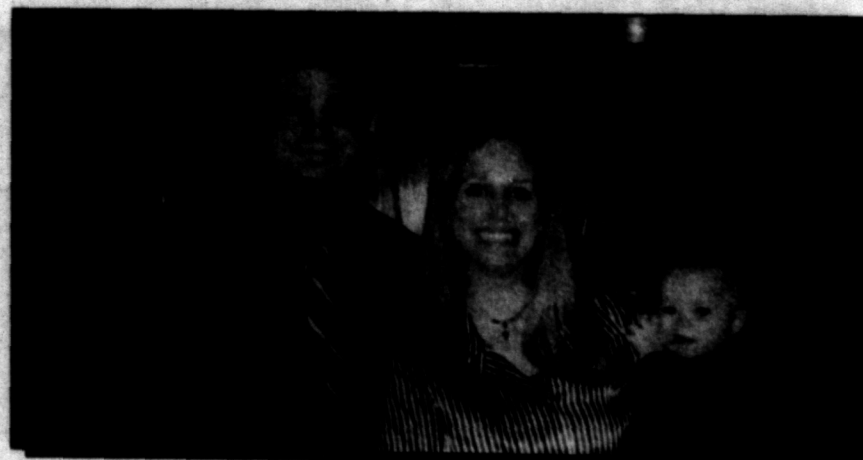
2. Eagle Ridge Church, Raymond, has called Scott T. Worley as its new bivocational pastor. Scott and his wife Sandy, who works in the Financial Services Department of the Mississippi Baptist Con-

vention Board, previously served at Beaverhead Church, Dillon, Mont.



2. Worley and wife Sandy

3. Meadowview Church, Starkville, has called Jason Middleton as pastor. He is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and is currently enrolled in New Orleans Seminary extension courses at BMC. He and his wife Tiffany have one daughter, Madison.



3. Middleton and family

First Church, Vicksburg, dedicates expanded ministry

VICKSBURG (Special) — First Church, Vicksburg, held an open house and dedication on Dec. 16 for its new Ministry Building, home to a growing number of programs that minister to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the community.

The Medical-Dental Ministry began ten years ago in the basement of the church. It has continually grown and outgrown its facilities, going from the basement suite to a donated home across the street to a space off campus and now to its present location.

In July 2006, a member family donated the 7200 square-foot Mafan Building to the church.

After limited upgrades to the second floor, Celebrate Recovery, Eastside A.A., Overeaters Anonymous, Life Hurts God Heals (for Youth), and GriefShare began meeting each week.

However, a total renovation of the first floor was required to bring it up to code for the Medical-Dental Clinic. Dozens of volunteers, coordinated by Richard Stuart and D.D. Davidson, worked tirelessly to completely remodel the downstairs area.

The facility now has four exam rooms and a triage room for medical assessments, dental suites, pharmacy, counseling

rooms, records room, and reception area.

The Medical-Dental Clinic treats the working poor and people with no private insurance or Medicare or Medicaid benefits. About thirty volunteers are required for each clinic, including three to six doctors, two dentists, two pharmacists, four to five nurses, pharmacy assistants, records keepers, receptionists, and counselors. The pharmacy issues medications purchased with grants and donations. No narcotics are dispensed.

This medical ministry was the brainchild of Vicksburg physician Dan Edney, who felt God was calling him to give more of himself.

"God expected more of me than just being a good Christian doctor," he said. "He expected me to serve him the way He wanted to be served."

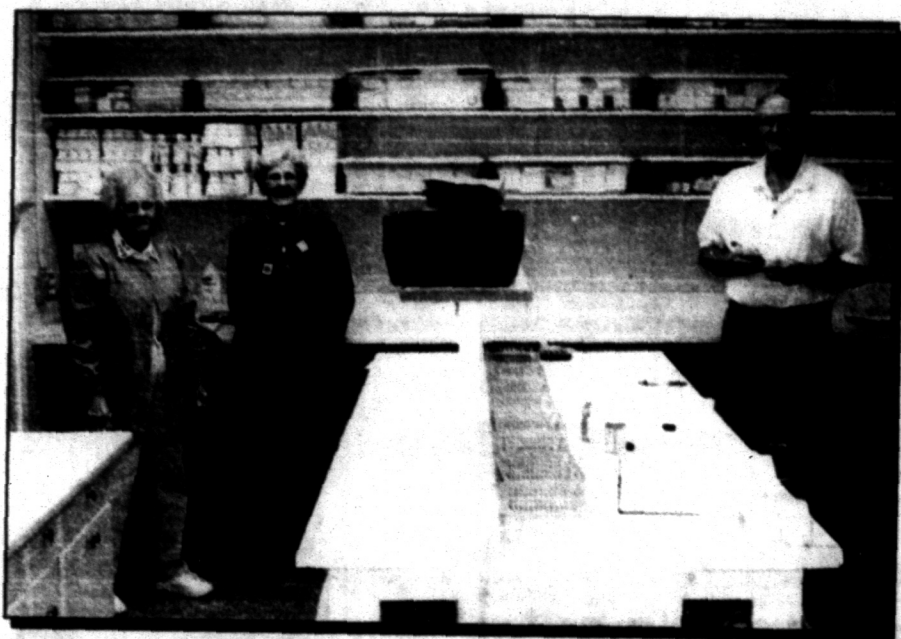
Edney said the ministry is approaching 10,000 patients served and estimated that the clinic has provided nearly one million dollars worth of health-care services over the last decade. On November 15, 93 clients were served, this being the largest number seen thus far in a single night.

The clinic is located at 1315 Adams Street and meets the third Thursday of each month, beginning at 5:00 p.m. Patients are seen on a first come-first served basis.

Pastor Matt Buckles invites churches from Mississippi to attend a clinic night to see this ministry in operation. God may be calling them to begin a similar ministry in their community.



GRAND OPENING — Present at the Dec. 16 ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Ministry Building at First Church, Vicksburg, were (from left) Richard Stuart; Hester Pitts, clinic administrator; D.D. Davidson; Daniel Edney; Martin Chaney; Nell Woods; Harry Woods; David Blackledge, deacon chairman; and Matt Buckles, pastor.



NEW PHARMACY — Inspecting the pharmacy in the new ministry building at First Church, Vicksburg, during the Dec. 16 grand opening were (from left) Sue Snow, Janice Partridge, and Kerry Pitts.

2 DE FEBRERO DE 2008
3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

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August 15-16, First Baptist Church, Biloxi

MS POSITIONS

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, Water Valley, Miss., is seeking a part-time music/youth minister. Please send resumes to Bethel Baptist Church, c/o Bill Finch, 500 S. Main Street, Water Valley, MS 38965-3327. email: bfinches@bellsouth.net phone: (662) 473-3667.

RAYMOND ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, Jackson, is seeking a part-time minister of children. For more information or to submit a resume, please call (601) 372-6154 or email pastor Jonathan Russell at jrussell@raymondroad.com.

FBC, MAGNOLIA, MISS., searching for an interim youth minister. Send resume to 126 S Clark St., Magnolia, MS 39652 or contact church office, (601) 783-3391.

ROSELAND PARK BAPTIST CHURCH in Picayune, Miss., is searching for a full-

time minister of music. Worship services (2 in the a.m., and 1 evening) are blended in musical style. Seminary degree or current student preferred. Send resumes to 2130 Highway 11 North, Picayune, MS 39466, attn: music search committee.

FAIRFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH in Moselle, Miss., is seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resume with references to Fairfield Baptist Church c/o Ramsey Coutta, 942 Moselle-Seminary Road, Moselle, MS 39459.

FULL-TIME MINISTER OF YOUTH/MUSIC. Parkview Baptist Church, Greenville, MS is seeking a full-time minister of music and/or youth. Please send resume to Personnel Committee, 712 McAllister Street, Greenville, MS 38701 or email to parkviewp@bellsouth.net.

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Alabama 35674, or email to jim.cummings@parkviewfamily.org.

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF Blytheville is seeking a FT minister of education with responsibilities including education, evangelism and administration. Please send resumes to Greg Bowers, pastor, FBC, 715 West Walnut Street, Blytheville, AR 72315. More information can be found at www.fbcbytheville.com.

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THE COLBERT LAUDERDALE BAPTIST Association is seeking resumes for a full-time camp director for their Earle Trent Assembly. The assembly is open year round for groups of all ages. Please send resumes to: Colbert Lauderdale Baptist 3901 Hatch Blvd., Sheffield, AL 35660, or email to eddy.garner@clbaptist.org.

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James (Heavy) Garrett
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Earnest Garvin
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Laurel
Mrs. Ovella Gattman
Dan W. Southerland
Mr. Don Graham
Seekers SSC, Petal-Harvey BC-Petal
Dorothy Boyd Green
JoAnn & Jimmy Carruth
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Bobby Jo Hale
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Poplarville
Geraldine T. Johnson
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Annie R. Sullivan & Family
Joyce Sweet & Family
Jerri Johnson
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Margaret Rayburn
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Ms. Maggie Worthy
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Kay Underwood Young
Mr. & Mrs. Danny Young

The New Year is off to a great start!

Already in 2008, The Baptist Children's Village has been blessed with many church groups becoming involved with the ministry. However, there is always a place for you and your church group. There are opportunities to collect items i.e. paper products & cleaning supplies, repair a cottage, tour a campus, plan a work day on the grounds, or schedule an activity with the children.

Please contact Chrystelle Thames at 601-922-2242 or go to www.baptistchildrensvillage.com to earn how you can get involved.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

The Motive

Luke 15:1-2, 11-24

By Andy Vaughn

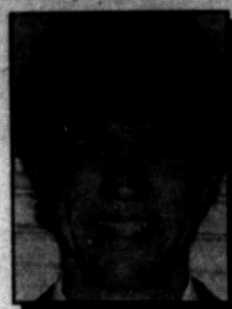
Driving up to the dilapidated house trailer I focused in on the no trespassing sign dangling from the front door. As I walked up the steps toward the door I noticed a rusty chain that linked an empty dog collar to a utility pole. My thoughts raced as I wondered where the dog had escaped to and if he would return and greet me with a not so friendly chomp onto my lower leg.

I knocked on the door, and after hearing a loud crash inside the mobile home, the door was flung open! The man greeted me with a grunt as the smoke from whatever he was smoking struck me in the face. I introduced myself to him and asked if I could have a few minutes to talk with him. He nod-

ded his head yes, and he said, "Whatever." I was armed with a survey filled with questions that eventually led to a presentation of the gospel. I shared with the man the good news of Jesus Christ, and he told me that was a good story.

A few minutes of brief conversation passed as he stood before me with his eyes fixed on the ground before us. At that time he did not respond to the gospel as I hoped he would. At the close of our visit I asked, "May I come back for another visit?" His answer to my question was yes. I thanked the man for his time as I walked away from his home.

The man agreed to another visit with his simple "Yes", but I never returned. I was able to chalk up another visit to my



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list of figures for the year as I moved on to the next person. It seems like I was not motivated enough to reach out to him again! I would be interested to know if anyone else has taken the opportunity to share with him about Christ.

Consider the question, "What drives my motivation for witnessing?" Some people are motivated by the socio-economic makeup of the neighborhood they witness to; others may be motivated by how many homes they can visit in one night. Today, we must focus on what Scripture teaches to be the true motivation for sharing the gospel.

Luke 15:2 (NASB) says, "And both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.'" One thing we must take notice of is no matter how much we try to do what is right, someone is going to grumble about it. Jesus was willing to reach

out to those that needed to hear, and yes, someone grumbled about it. But Jesus had the right motivation for His actions, and He accomplished what He purposed to do.

Luke chapter 15 shows Jesus' motivation for ministry through three parables. Each of these parables tells the story of someone or something that was lost. Luke 19:10 (NASB) says, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." There is no doubt that Jesus came to save that which was lost. The question we must ask is, "What is my motivation for trying to witness to others?"

Luke 15:13 says, "And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living." The parable of the Prodigal son describes a young man that decided to go out on his own searching for a way that he thought would be better. As

he ventured out he eventually found himself separated from his father and in great need.

In today's world we are surrounded by people that have ventured out on their own and become separated from the love of the Father in heaven. These lost people need someone to point them to the love and grace of God.

Verse 20 describes the father's action toward the son as he saw him. It is amazing how the father never lost hope in his wayward son. God's love toward His children speaks of a love that never loses hope.

Verse 24 of Luke chapter 15 describes the life of a son that was lost and then found the restoration he needed in his father's love.

If we genuinely want to see people have a restored relationship with God, we must be motivated through God's love to reach out to the lost in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Vaughn is pastor of First Church, Fulton.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Do You Care About Others?

Genesis 18:20-26, 19:12-16

By Melleen Moore

There are hundreds of ways to show others that we care about them. Recently, I had the opportunity to visit CaringBridge.com. It is neat to show love and concern by signing the address book, and/or leaving a message. The family could update the website and read the messages sent. At times, we desire to pray for others, and sometimes the urging of the Holy Spirit calls us to pray for others — intercessory prayer. Abraham's talk with God caused him to intercede for the people of Sodom.

Open Your Mind to Judgments' Reality, Genesis 18:20-21

With joy Abraham received three visitors — angels in the form of men, one being the angel of the Lord. Abraham

quickly offered hospitality of a place to rest, water to wash their feet and food and drink to refresh their hearts. Abraham enjoyed the visit and received confirmation of the son to be born to him and Sarah. As the men arose to leave they looked towards Sodom. Abraham accompanied the visitors a short distance while the angel of the Lord pondered thoughts of confiding in Abraham their intended purpose. Acknowledging that Abraham would be a great nation and influence their walk in the Lord, he speaks of the outcry against Sodom. The words struck a tender cord in Abraham's heart, for Lot had "pitched his tent toward Sodom" Genesis 13:12 KJV. The outcry was a wicked city with perverted moral values — homosexuality of the men,



Moore

young and old. The visit to the city would verify the condition of the city and the reality of judgment.

Offer Intercessory Prayer, Genesis 18:22-26

The two visitors went to Sodom, but the Lord remained with Abraham. Abraham stood still before the Lord, showing a drastic change in behavior. The previous verses record his busyness to provide food and comfort. Abraham's focus is now on the Lord, so he comes near to engage His heart. The stated question is the beginning of an intercessory prayer — "Would you also destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Genesis 18:23 NKJV. Abraham chooses to intercede as he knows God is obedient, is close to God and has a specific petition. Being an intercessor is part of being made in "His image," as Jesus intercedes for us daily. Abraham asked another question — "Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city" Genesis 18:

24 NKJV. Abraham is aware of the sinfulness of Sodom but speaks on behalf of Lot as well as the inhabitants in the city. He shares his burden with the Lord for mercy and justice. The Lord knowing there are not fifty righteous men allows Abraham the liberty to intercede even down to ten righteous men. Each time the Lord granted Abraham's humble petition as he persistently asked for mercy.

Observe God's Compassion, Genesis 19:12-16

God's compassion unfolds with Lot, his wife and two daughters being ushered out of Sodom. Judgment is inevitable as the outcry about Sodom has proven true. It is a sinful and wicked city. The two visitors had come to Sodom for an onsite observation. Upon arrival, Lot was found sitting at the gate to the city, suggesting some position of authority. He invited the men to rest at his house for the night; however, they offered to stay in the city square. Lot strongly opposed for their safety. That evening the men of the city

called to Lot for the visitors to come "out to us that we may know them carnally" Gen 19:5 NKJV. All of Lot's efforts to discourage their behavior failed — no reasoning, no offering his virgin daughters and no matter of persuasion could change the mind of the wicked men. Lot himself was in danger as the men pushed against the door to enter Lot's house. The visitors used blindness to stop the aggressive behavior of the men. Lot was told "whomever you have in the city — take them out of this place" Genesis 19:12 NKJV "for it will be destroyed." Lot told his sons-in-law, already or prospective, to leave the city, but they thought him to be joking. Lot had lost the respect of the men of the city. The sincerity of the compassion and the urgency of the judgment caused the visitors to literally take the hands of Lot, his wife and two daughters and lead them from the city before its destruction. God's compassion saved the lives of Lot's family.

Moore is a member of Macedonia Church, Petal.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will

be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

THE BAPTIST Record


Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be

clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

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STATE EVANGELISM CONFERENCE 2008

January 20-22, 2008

